

for his son, among them), but the scribe who indited this eloquent document—one of the most spirited protests against tyranny ever written—evidently poured out his whole heart on the paper. The penman was in all probability John Knox, and Knox, by suppressing for the most part his rage against idolatry, and directing it straight at the mundane evils which preyed on his country, never penned anything so telling. John Knox is at his best in such passages, and the ill-natured critics who would reduce him to the level of the swashbuckler cannot surely have read him at his best. Every line reflects the power of a strong personality, which critical carping can never belittle.

By his self-restraint he fairly took the wind out of the regent's sails. It was as defenders of the commonweal against a wretched *regime*, supported by a foreign soldiery, that the Lords of the Congregation advanced this time from Stirling to Edinburgh. On their arrival on the 16th October they sent a final demand to the regent in Leith for the dismissal of the French troops. Her reply was a point-blank refusal. Such a letter, she added, would have come better from a prince to his subjects than from subjects to their prince. On the same day on which they received this curt communication, the 2<sup>nd</sup> October, the lords, barons, and burgesses assembled in the Tolbooth to debate the question of her deposition. They first put the query, whether a tyrannic ruler may rightfully be deposed, to Knox and his colleague Willock. Both answered that although magistrates were appointed by divine ordinance, their power was limited by the law of God and their duty to the subject. The queen regent, having transgressed both the law of God and the law of the land, and having absolutely refused amendment, might justly be deprived of her authority by the lords and barons, the natural representatives of the nation. Deprived she accordingly was, at the conclusion of a long recapitulation of the facts of her mis-government, as an "enemye to our commonweall, abusing the power of the said authoritie, to the destructioun of the samyn." The sentence purported to be given in the name and by the authority of the king and queen. This was of course a fiction, springing from the desire to give their proceedings a constitutional colour; for these lords, barons, and commons who